

THE TRAGEDIE OF HAMLET, Prince of Denmarke.

Actus Primus. Scena Prima.

Enter Barnardo and Francisco two Centinels.

Barnardo.

Ho's there?

Fran. Nay answer me: Stand & unfold
your selfe.

Bar. Long liue the King.

Fran. Barnardo?

Bar. He.

Fran. You come most carefully vpon your houre.

Bar. 'Tis now strook twelue, get thee to bed Francisco.

Fran. For this releefe much thanks: 'Tis bitter cold,
And I am sicke at heart.

Bar. Haue you had quiet Guard?

Fran. Not a Mouse stirring.

Bar. Well, goodnight. If you do meet Horatio and
Marcellus, the Riuals of my Watch, bid them make hast.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Fran. I thinke I heare them. Stand: who's there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And Leige-men to the Dane.

Fran. Giue you good night.

Mar. O farwel honest Soldier, who hath relieu'd you?

Fra. Barnardo ha's my place: giue you goodnight.

Exit Fran.

Mar. Holla Barnardo.

Bar. Say, what is Horatio there?

Hor. A peece of him.

Bar. Welcome Horatio, welcome good Marcellus.

Mar. What, ha's this thing appear'd againe to night.

Bar. I haue seene nothing.

Mar. Horatio saies, 'tis but our Fantasie,

And will not let beleefe take hold of him

Touching this dreaded sight, & wise seene of vs,

Therefore I haue intreated him along

With vs, to watch the minutes of this Night,

That if againe this Apparition comes,

He may approue our eyes, and speake to it.

Hor. Tush, tush, 'twill not appeare.

Bar. Sit downe a while,

And let vs once againe assaile your eares,

That are so fortified against our Story,

What we two Nights haue seene.

Hor. Well, sit we downe,

And let vs heare Barnardo speake of this.

Bar. Last night of all,

When yond same Starre that's Westward from the Pole

Had made his course 'illume that part of Heauen

Where now it burnes, Marcellus and my selfe,
The Bell then beating one.

Mar. Peace, breake thee of:

Enter the Ghost.

Looke where it comes againe.

Bar. In the same figure, like the King that's dead,

Mar. Thou art a Scholler; speake to it Horatio.

Bar. Lookes it not like the King? Marke it Horatio.

Hor. Most like: It harrowes me with fear & wonder

Bar. It would be spoke too.

Mar. Question it Horatio.

Hor. What art thou that vsurp'st this time of night,

Together with that Faire and Warlike forme

In which the Maiesty of buried Denmarke

Did sometimes march: By Heauen I charge thee speake.

Mar. It is offended.

Bar. See, it stalkes away.

Hor. Stay: speake; speake: I Charge thee, speake.

Exit the Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Bar. How now Horatio? You tremble & look pale:

Is not this something more then Fantasie?

What thinke you on't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this beleue

Without the sensible and true auouch

Of mine owne eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the King?

Hor. As thou art to thy selfe,

Such was the very Armour he had on,

When th' Ambitious Norway combatted;

So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle

He smot the flegged Pollax on the Ice.

'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus twice before, and iust at this dead houre,

With Martiall stalke, hath he gone by our Watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not:

But in the grosse and scope of my Opinion,

This boades some strange eruption to our State.

Mar. Good now sit downe, & tell me he that knowes

Why this same strict and most obseruant Watch,

So nightly toyles the subiect of the Land,

And why such dayly Cast of Brazon Cannon

And Forraigne Mart for Implements of warre:

Why such impresse of Ship-wrights, whose fore Taske

Do's not diuide the Sunday from the weeke,

What might be toward, that this sweety haft

Doth make the Night ioynt-Labourer with the day:

Who is't that can informe me?

Hor. That can I,

The Tragedie of Hamlet.

At least the whisper goes so: Our last King,
Whose Image euen but now appear'd to vs,
Was (as you know) by Fortinbras of Norway,
(Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate Pride)
Dar'd to the Combate. In which, our Valiant Hamlet,
(For so this side of our knowne world esteem'd him)
Did slay this Fortinbras: who by a Seal'd Compact,
Well ratified by Law, and Heraldrie,
Did forfeite (with his life) all those his Lands
Which he stood seiz'd on, to the Conqueror:
Against the which, a Moity competent
Was gaged by our King: which had return'd
To the Inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he bin Vanquisher, as by the same Cou'nant
And carriage of the Article designe,
His fell to Hamlet. Now fir, young Fortinbras,
Of vnimproued Mettle, hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway, heere and there,
Shark'd vp a List of Landleffe Resolutes,
For Foode and Diet, to some Enterprize
That hath a stomacke in't: which is no other
(And it doth well appeare vnto our State)
But to recouer of vs by strong hand
And termes Compulsatiue, those foresaid Lands
Soby his Father lost: and this (I take it)
Is the maine Motiue of our Preparations,
The Soure of this our Watch, and the cheefe head
Of this post-hast, and Romage in the Land.

Enter Ghost againe.

But soft, behold: Loe, where it comes againe:

He crosse it, though it blast me. Stay illusion:

If thou hast any sound, or vfe of Voyce,

Speake to me. If there be any good thing to be done,

That may to thee do ease, and grace to me; speake to me.

If thou art priuy to thy Countries Fate

(Which happily foreknowing may auoyd) Oh speake.

Or, if thou hast vp-hoorded in thy life

Extorted Treasure in the wombe of Earth,

(For which, they say, you Spirits oft walke in death)

Speake of it. Stay, and speake. Stop it Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my Partizan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Bar. 'Tis heere.

Hor. 'Tis heere.

Mar. 'Tis gone.

Exit Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so Maiesticall

To offer it the shew of Violence,

For it is as the Ayre, invulnerable,

And our vaine blowes, malicious Mockery.

Bar. It was about to speake, when the Cocke crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing

Vpon a fearfull Summons. I haue heard,

The Cocke that is the Trumpet to the day,

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding Throate

Awake the God of Day: and at his warning,

Whether in Sea, or Fire, in Earth, or Ayre,

Th'extravagant, and erring Spirit, hies

To his Confinde. And of the truth heerein,

This present Obiect made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the Cocke.

Some sayes, that euer 'gainst that Season comes

Wherein our Sauours Birch is celebrated,

The Bird of Dawning singeth all night long:

And then (they say) no Spirit can walke abroad,

The nights are wholesome, then no Planets strike,

No Faery talkes, nor Witch hath power to Charme:

So hallow'd, and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So haue I heard, and do in part beleue it:

But looke, the Morne in Russet mantle clad,

Walkes o're the dew of yon high Easterne Hill,

Breake we our Watch vp, and by my aduice

Let vs impart what we haue seene to night

Vnto yong Hamlet. For vpon my life,

This Spirit dumbe to vs, will speake to him:

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,

As needfull in our Loues, fitting our Duty?

Mar. Let do't I pray, and I this morning know

Where we shall finde him most conueniently.

Exit

Scena Secunda.

Enter Claudius King of Denmarke, Gertrude the Queene,
Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, and his Sister O-
phelia, Lords Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our deere Brothers death
The memory be Greene: and that it vs besitted
To beare our hearts in Greefe, and our whole Kingdome
To be contracted in one brow of woe:
Yet so farre hath Discretion fought with Nature,
That we with wisest sorrow thinke on him,
Together with remembrance of our selues.
Therefore our sometimes Sister, now our Queen,
Th'Imperiall Ioyntresse of this warlike State,
Haue we, as 'twere, with a defeated ioy,
With one Auspicious, and one Dropping eye,
With mirth in Funerall, and with Dirge in Marriage,
In equall Scale weighing Delight and Dole
Taken to Wife; nor haue we heerein barr'd
Your better Wisedomes, which haue freely gone
With this affaire along, for all our Thanks.
Now followes, that you know young Fortinbras,
Holding a weake supposal of our worth;
Or thinking by our late deere Brothers death,
Our State to be disioynt, and out of Frame,
Collegued with the dreame of his Aduantage;
He hath not sayl'd to pester vs with Message,
Importing the surrender of those Lands
Lost by his Father: with all Bonds of Law
To our most valiant Brother. So much for him.

Enter Voltemand and Cornelius.

Now for our selfe, and for this time of meeting

Thus much the businesse is. We haue heere writ

To Norway, Vncle of young Fortinbras,

Who Impotent and Bedrid, scarcely heares

Of this his Nephewes purpose, to suppress

His further gate heerein. In that the Leuires,

The Lifts, and full proportions are all made

Out of his subiect: and we heere dispatch

You good Cornelius, and you Voltemand,

For bearing of this greeting to old Norway,

Giuing to you no further personall power

To businesse with the King, more then the scope

Of these dilated Articles allow:

Farewell, and let your haft commend your duty.

Vol. In that, and all things, will we shew our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing, heartily farewell.

Exit Voltemand and Cornelius.

And now Laertes, what's the newes with you?

You